

Dreaming big

Missionary expects the miraculous in Germany

BRAUNSCHWEIG, Germany (BP) — Southern Baptist missionary Martha Moore doesn't waste time dreaming small. The Southern Baptist missionary from Tampa, Fla., has learned to fully expect that God will do something miraculous.

Without question, she expects that will happen tonight when her apartment in northern Germany will be filled with students, some excited to be with other believers and some still wondering if this Christianity they are hearing about can be trusted.

Moore fills her table with a traditional German *abendbrot*, a meal of bread, sausage, and cheese. She knows there won't be much left over. As students, carrying a cold drizzle fill her apartment, she's quick to make newcomers feel welcome in seemingly effortless German.

This is the way she approaches each day of ministry, expecting big things from God.

After graduating from Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth, Moore cut her teeth doing student ministry in the university hubs of Vancouver, Canada, and Los Angeles.

When asked why she had come to live in Jena, Germany,

in 1998, she said that she was a Christian and was going to help people explore who God is. The person responded, "Good luck! Do you know where you are? You're in East Germany. Nobody cares about God here. You don't have a chance."

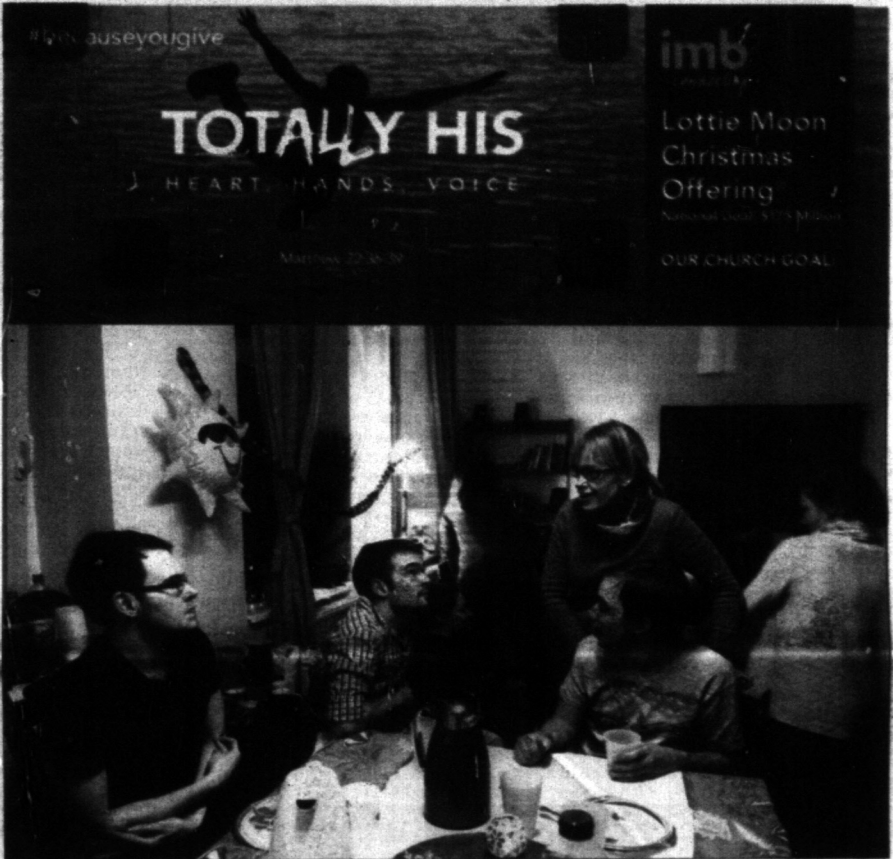
Not one to back down from a challenge, that's all Moore needed to hear. Her big dream took shape.

Seeking out the few Christians she could find, she started building relationships among college students in Jena. Fellowship dinners led to discussions about the Bible. Laying out tables full of sandwiches and gummy bears, Moore opened her apartment to anyone who would attend. Sometimes she invited people to meet her at cafés to discuss their spiritual questions.

Even before she had an established campus ministry, she could see her prayers being answered. "I trust God and pray that He will put people in my path that are seeking and that want to know Him."

Within two years of beginning her ministry in Germany,

see GERMANY on p. 8



REACHING STUDENTS — Southern Baptist Missionary Martha Moore (wearing green sweater) talks with students at a Connexion event in her apartment in Braunschweig, Germany. Moore started Connexion, a campus evangelism ministry, in 2000 on one East German campus. Today she supervises teams in three German cities and one in Spain. (BP photo)

'The American' stands for Christ among Scots

GLASGOW, Scotland (BP) — If you listen to Gena Wilson imitate the Scottish brogue, you'll think she was born in Glasgow. After 17 years, the woman from Beaufort, S.C., can speak in a Scottish accent that even the locals mistake as their own.

She used to stick out as "the American," who for some inexplicable reason chose to live in one of the city's poorest areas. Now, she's just known to them as Gena — a friend, a mentor, and follower of Jesus.

She's led assemblies at the local high school, but most teenagers there have gotten to know her over a basketball or volleyball game, hamburgers

at a café, or Bible study in her apartment. At first, "the American" was just a cool novelty to hang out with, but she's become more like a mother figure to some of the troubled youth in her neighborhood.

When Graeme was suspended from school, Wilson counseled him. When Carol (not her real name) was beaten up by her boyfriend and needed a safe place to go in the middle of the night, she went to Wilson's flat.

When the mother of Jessica (not her real name) was threatening to throw herself out of

see SCOTS on p. 9



FRIENDS — In a local restaurant in Glasgow, Scotland, Southern Baptist missionary Gena Wilson (left) shares a laugh with Graeme McKelvie, a law graduate of the University of Glasgow whom she has mentored since his high school days. Gena says she loves Graeme, a believer, like a son and prays for him to turn to Christ when he has thoughts of straying from the faith. (BP photo)

Inside

Directions

Sunday School

Lessons

Editorial

Bibliography

How to Be

a Christian

The Baptist

Village

Just for the

Classifieds

3-DIGIT 372

#0000 2911 2125#

005 DTM

SOUTHERN BAPT HISTORICAL SOC

901 COMMERCE ST STE 401

NASHVILLE TN 37203-3620

DEC 18 2013



From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

Guard duty

We tend to read about church negligence in faraway places and in other denominations, and comfort ourselves with the thought that it couldn't happen here. Not in our back yard. Not in the Bible Belt. Not in Mississippi. Not in a Mississippi Baptist church.

Think again. All of us would like to believe problems crop up at a minimum among our own churches, and that's probably true — but one misstep is too many when there are resources to help prevent such failures. Churches that are slack in their vigilance or lazy in their planning will find out the hard way that lawsuits and bad publicity do happen to Mississippi Baptist churches that are unprepared.

The lessons to be learned from the Catholic Church's shortcomings and the Penn State scandal, to name only a couple of really bad situations, are manifold. One eminent lesson for us should be that our Baptist churches and institutions in Mississippi are at least as vulnerable — and possibly as unprepared — as was Penn State. It doesn't have to be that way.

There are concrete steps that churches can take to shrink the risk almost to zero. First, qualified legal counsel should always be on call to deal

with any number of issues that could arise. Another good start would be to acquire the publication, *Keeping Your Church Out of Court*, a step-by-step manual available for a small charge from the Pastor/Leadership Development Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Topics covered in the manual include Church Organization and Operation; Church Liability; Decision Makers Liability and Protection; Employment Law; Taxes and Governmental Compliance; and a number of model forms such as articles of incorporation, how to craft a church constitution, volunteer worker applications, and a child abuse prevention policy checklist.

No system is perfect and no plan is flawless, but every Mississippi Baptist church should take the actions necessary to shield our precious ministries from ever-growing dangers in our midst.

The consequences of letting down our guard are too high. Too much is at stake, up to and including the souls of our children. Contact the Pastor/Leadership Department at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3305 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 305. E-mail: ctaylor@mbcb.org.

Get started today.



keeping your
CHURCH
OUT of court

A very special anniversary

The Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) auxiliary of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering are celebrating their 125th anniversary this year!

The first missions offering for international missions was the result of pleas from Southern Baptist missionary Lottie Moon to the women of the churches to send more workers to China to help share the Gospel with so many who had never heard.

The goal was set to gather enough money to send two women, but when the receipts were counted, there was enough for three. While the offering that began in 1888 did not carry the name Lottie Moon until 1918 — six years after her death — the purpose of the offering was closely tied to the reason WMU organized.

The women had heard the stories of missions life through the testimonies and letters of Lottie Moon and other missionaries. They realized the needs were great and God was calling them to do more, and so they organized.

Those early documents reveal "the women of the churches connected with the Southern Baptist Convention, desirous of stimulating the missionary spirit and the grace of giving among the women and children of the churches, and aiding in collecting funds for missionary purposes ..."

They organized to increase support for our missionaries and to raise awareness of missions needs within the churches.

It wasn't long before the need for a systematic way of educating our children emerged, first with children (Sunbeams), then among the boys (Royal Ambassadors, or RAs) and then among the girls (Girls in Action, or GAs).

Southern Baptist churches had a full program of ongoing education for the purpose of missions. The impact of those early decisions can best be seen in the lives of people since that day, both those who were called and went to the missions field, and those whose lives were changed as they heard the stories of Jesus.

To this day, missionaries often share the influence of missions education on their personal call to missions service.



Guest opinion
with Wanda S. Lee

For example, Amanda Mellot knew God was calling her to missions during her years in GAs and Acteens, the missions education program for teen girls. "I knew I loved Jesus and that there are people in the world who didn't know Him," she shares. "I was burdened at a young age for lost people in the world. GAs and Acteens were the foundation of my life; I knew I wanted to be part of what was going on in the world as God uses His church for His renown."

Currently serving as a journeyman in East Asia for the International Mission Board (IMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention, Amanda says, "In GAs, I received a foundation of what the Bible says about missions. I learned a lot about missionaries and what they do around the world to share the Gospel. Then in Acteens, I got to put my knowledge to practice as we went out into the community and on missions trips."

Looking back, she realized "it is important to encourage girls as they grow in their relationship with Christ... to follow what He says even if it goes against norms of society. GAs and Acteens are where I was encouraged to honor God with my life no matter what avenue is taken."

This age in a girl's life is so critical for how she will be when she leaves her family, goes to college, or goes off to work. When she is firmly planted in the world, she will remember the truth of who God is when pressures of this life are faced."

IMB missionary Susie Rain started her missions journey in Mission Friends, then GAs and Acteens. She says Bible verses "memorized as a GA still pop into my brain when I'm out

see LEE on p. 11

THE BaptistRecord

Editor
William H. Perkins Jr.
wperkins@mbcb.org

Associate Editor
Tory Martin
tmartin@mbcb.org

Layout/Design
Megan Young
myoung@mbcb.org

Advertising
Emily Jones
ejones@mbcb.org

Circulation Manager
Brenda Quattlebaum
bquattlebaum@mbcb.org

Editor Emeritus
Don McGregor

Baptist Record Advisory Committee:
Dwayne Parker, Flora Paul Sims, Pontotoc
Barry Burris, Terry Carl White, Meridian
Billie Buckley, Petal
Russell Mord, Sturgis

Postmaster:
Send changes of address to: The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

Send news, communication, and address changes to: The Editor, Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

Tel: (601) 968-3800
Fax: (601) 292-3330
E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org



BAPTISTS

VOLUME 137 • NUMBER 49 • ISSN-0005-5778

Published weekly except weeks of July 4 and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$10.35 per year payable in advance. Economy plans available for cooperating Mississippi churches. Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, MS. Member, Association of State Baptist Papers. Deadlines: News items — one calendar week prior to requested publication date. Advertising — two calendar weeks prior to requested publication date. All submissions are subject to editing.

First person: God can work miracles in every life

By Maria Elena Baseler
Correspondent

Inside a small Buddhist temple in Shiojiri, Japan, 23-year-old missionary Steven Kunkel sits at a grand piano and plays one of his original compositions called, *Creation*.

Seated on the floor nearby, a Buddhist woman listens to the music, enthralled. She's the caretaker of the temple and an adjoining Buddhist training center and she's giving Steven, our International Mission Board (IMB) media crew, and a Japanese pastor a tour of the place.

The impromptu concert develops after Steven spots the Yamaha piano and asks the woman's permission to play it for her. She watches and listens, transfixed, as Steven's fingers glide across the keyboard.

When he finishes, she wants to hear more. His next song, another original called, *The Battle*, leaves her equally captivated.

Listening to Steven's music, I feel my own heart stir a bit, too. I remember the first time I heard him play these songs a half a world away in Asunción, Paraguay. It was the day after he was commissioned by his church as an independent missionary to Japan.

Steven sat at the piano in his parents' home, sharing his music with family friend Jonathan Yao, IMB photographer Rebecca Springer, and me. As Steven's moving melodies filled the living room, I glanced at his parents, IMB missionaries Tim and Iracema Kunkel, who listened nearby. The joy in their eyes told a story I started writing more than 13 years ago, when Tim, an American, and Iracema, who grew up in Brazil, were IMB missionaries in Salto, Uruguay. I worked as a writer at IMB's home office in Richmond, Va., but I knew God was calling me to serve overseas as a missionary.

"There's no way I'll go," I told God. I loved traveling to the mission field reporting stories about missionaries and their families, but go myself as a missionary? "Please don't make me do this," I prayed.

I had every excuse in the book and voiced each one of them to God. Often, "Forget it, Lord," I actually prayed. "I don't have what it takes." What does it take?

In the midst of that struggle, I spent a week with the Kunkel family in Uruguay on assignment for what then was IMB's *The Commission* magazine. Steven was just 10 years old. His older brother John Glenn was 12. Their older sister Julia had already left home for college.

Down-to-earth, authentic, and fun, Tim and Iracema opened their home to an IMB photographer and me that week. In an interview I'll never forget, the couple shared candidly what they experienced the day they learned Steven had autism, a develop-



AUTISM NO BARRIER — Steven Kunkel (right) watches a Buddhist monk ringing a bell outside a shrine in Narai-juku, a preserved, historic town on the edge of Shiojiri, Japan. Steven, who is autistic, felt called to Japan as a 15-year-old missionary kid in Uruguay. Seven years later, he began serving as a volunteer missionary in Shiojiri, a small city in Japan's Nagano province. (IMB photo)



GOSPEL FOR KIDS — Volunteer missionary Steven Kunkel (top of circle), son of Southern Baptist missionaries in South America, teaches a Saturday Bible study for children at Jesus the Gospel Church in Shiojiri, Japan. At age five, Steven couldn't speak because of autism but today, he speaks four languages including Japanese and is learning five more. (IMB photo)

mental brain disorder that causes problems in communication, behavior, and social interaction.

"It was like I lost one child and then another one was born," recalled Iracema, whose great grandparents were saved in the 1880s through the ministry of Southern Baptist missionaries to Brazil, "but I knew God had a plan for Steven."

"At first I thought, 'Let's just pack up and go home,'" admitted Tim, "but then I realized that when God called us to missions, He knew the children we were going to have. He allowed this to happen, and He has a purpose in this."

The Kunkels saw that purpose unfold while staying faithful to their missions calling and

trying to help Steven and their two older children become all God created them to be. At the same time, they shared the Gospel, trained Uruguayan church leaders, and helped Uruguayan Baptists start churches.

Because Uruguay offered few educational programs for people with autism, Iracema studied special education so she could teach Steven herself. Soon, God opened doors for sharing Christ with Uruguayan families affected by autism. Other doors opened through the Kunkels' friendships with Uruguayans.

"Many people we've met think we've been dealt a 'bum hand,'" said Tim, "but when they realize we don't feel that way, it helps us be a witness of God's power."

Related video resources

<http://vimeo.com/71968136>

<http://vimeo.com/63123361>

I saw that power for myself one night in a restaurant while we shared a meal with the Kunkel family. After we finished eating, Steven walked up to the restaurant host and looked him straight in the eye.

"Do you have ice cream?" he asked in Spanish. His parents watched, amazed at how far God had brought Steven. Six years earlier Steven couldn't even speak English, let alone Spanish, Tim said.

"He's a walking miracle," Tim said. Iracema added, "A lesson I've learned through Steven is that miracles don't always happen in the blink of an eye. Sometimes God does miracles through a long slow process, using many different people. Autism is never cured, but I feel God has been healing Steven little by little."

After I got back to Richmond, I prayed for the right words to tell this family's story. "Call it, 'A lesson in miracles,'" God seemed to say. Soon after that, God did a miracle in me, too. Five months after the story was published, I was appointed an IMB media missionary.

In the years that followed, I lost touch with the Kunkels but this past year at an IMB meeting in Chile, I heard Iracema call my name.

"When I saw your name on the list [of participants], I couldn't

wait to talk to you!" she said. "You won't believe what's happened with Steven! He's going to be a missionary to Japan!"

Over a meal the next day, she and Tim shared the rest of their story. At age 15 in Uruguay, Steven felt God's call to Japan. No Japanese people lived in Salto, so Steven started trying to learn Japanese on his own. Iracema bought him a Japanese phrasebook, and he soon mastered all of it.

"He couldn't stop talking about Japan," she recalled.

The next year, IMB transferred the Kunkels to Paraguay, where many Japanese immigrants live. Steven attended a Japanese school, served in a Japanese-Paraguayan church, and learned to speak and read Japanese.

In 2011 Steven visited Japan with family friend Jonathan Yao, and that trip opened the door for him to serve as a volunteer missionary there.

Three weeks after seeing the Kunkels in Chile, I flew to Paraguay to attend Steven's commissioning service at a Japanese-Paraguayan house church in Asunción.

"I've felt today that so many questions about Steven's autism have been answered, like a veil is being lifted from my eyes and I'm seeing things through God's eyes," Iracema told me after the service. "I'm thinking, 'For this day you were born, Steven.'"

A few months later, I saw some things through God's eyes, too. On location in Japan's Nagano province, our IMB media crew interviewed Steven about his work as a missionary there. For a *Kids On Mission* video we titled, *God Can Use You*, Steven shared what God had done in his life.

"My favorite verse is Philippians 4:13: 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me,'" Steven said. "No matter how disabled you are or what kind of house you live in or what kind of country you're from or what kind of race you are, you just know that if God is with you, who can be against you, because through Him we can do all things."

He added, "I'm fulfilling the work that God called me to do, and I feel I am following my vision and my dreams for what God wants me to do on this earth."

Listening to Steven's interview that day, I realized I was following God's dream for me, too. "Thank you, Lord, for your lesson in miracles," I prayed.

The Kunkels are serving in Paraguay through Southern Baptists' gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and the Cooperative Program, which fund the presence and missions outreach of nearly 5,000 Southern Baptist missionaries internationally. For more information, visit imb.org/offering.

Baseler serves as an IMB writer/editor in the Americas.

The dictionary defines a plague as an epidemic disease causing a high rate of mortality or lots of folks get sick and lots of folks die. Throughout the centuries there have been plagues that have hit countries around our world. There are history books dedicated to following the outbreaks of diseases that created plagues and impacted our world. Usually a plague is associated with some descriptive phrase like the Black Plague. In America, most of our devastating plagues have been associated with flu outbreaks or the anticipated outbreaks that have caused people to be afraid. Strangely though, today America is facing a plague that very few people notice or acknowledge. It is a self-imposed plague. It is a crisis of our own making.

Recently, I was listening to a lecture by a doctor who was describing what was taking place in America. He said that we have crossed a tipping point in the last few years into a new health crisis that had been seen coming but that has finally arrived. For the first time, we now have more people with non-communicable diseases than we have people with communicable diseases. Then he went on to talk about how most of these diseases are the type which someone else cannot catch from us. For the most part, we have participated in the development of the disease within us.

You could probably write down most of these diseases from your own experience with friends, family, or information



The Plague

that has been around a long time. The list is extensive and almost endless, but it all points to the fact that often times we can do something about our condition. While people do get lung cancer without smoking, it is a fact that the number one contributor to lung disease is smoking. Look at all of the problems and complications that come to individuals, families, and society because of substance abuse whether it is alcohol, the abuse of prescription medication, or the general run of the mill problems that come because we eat too much and exercise too little. It all directs us to the fact that somehow and someday there needs to be a day-by-day

care and maintenance of our soul, body, mind, and emotions.

At that point, we begin to realize that we alone are the decision makers or maybe better stated, "I am the only one that can change many of the conditions of my life." When we come to the understanding that it is by God's grace that change can take place, He will enable us so that we begin to experience healing and wholeness. This can only be brought about and sustained by the Lord and our being yielded to Him.

I want to encourage every one of you to join with me in a journey over the next 12 months to **rise up in the name of Jesus and walk, live, change, and above**

all serve Christ. Your daily guidebook is the 2014 Diary/calendar that has been prepared and is available for \$1.50. Each day in 2014, there will be a verse of Scripture with which you can begin your day that points to some aspect of health and wholeness either spiritually, physically, mentally, or emotionally. It also includes a brief action statement that can encourage you to do something that day related to your health in one of those four areas. It is not just a New Year's resolution moment. It is a commitment to ask God every day to help make a difference in your overall health, one piece, one moment, and one decision at a time. Many of our churches have ordered these calendars for their members. Pastors will be speaking to these issues sprinkled throughout the year. You may ask why the focus on this kind of effort? Because:

1. The Lord cares about your good health.
 2. Here in Mississippi we have allowed so many bad health practices to become commonplace that we do not pay any attention to them.
 3. Without a doubt, the Lord wants you and me to be the best that we can be.
- So, now it is up to you and me to sincerely and genuinely come before the Lord and ask Him to guide us through the year and make a difference in us so that we can make a difference in our world.

The author can be contacted at directions@mcbcb.org.

Baptist teacher killed in Libya

AUSTIN, Texas (BP and local reports) — American teacher Ronnie Smith, gunned down Dec. 5 during his morning jog near the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi, Libya, served on staff of a Southern Baptist church in Texas before moving to Libya.



SMITH

Austin Stone Community Church in Austin is affiliated with the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention and Acts 29, an independent church planting network. Smith was director of equipping and resources at Austin Stone Church from 2009-11, and before that he served for two years as a pastoral intern.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for Smith's Dec. 5 murder, but Islamist militants in October had called for the kidnapping of U.S. citizens in Libya. Hospital officials said the teacher had been shot multiple times.

His death came 15 months after an attack on the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi killed four Americans, including U.S. Ambassador Chris Stevens. That attack remains mired in controversy about how the U.S. government handled the response to the incident.

Grieving friends on opposite sides of the globe remembered Smith, 33, as a devoted teacher, family man, and Christian.

Smith held a master's degree in chemistry from the University of Texas at Austin and had been teaching chemistry at the

International School Benghazi for 18 months.

His wife Anita and their young son had returned to the United States several weeks ago for Christmas break. Smith stayed behind to help his students through midterm exams and had planned to join his family in a few days.

"Ronnie and his family moved to Benghazi to teach high school chemistry and to be a blessing to the Libyan people..." a statement from Austin Stone Church stated. "Ronnie's greatest desire was for peace and prosperity in Libya and for the people of Libya to have the joy of knowing God through Christ."

A profile of Smith on the church website identified him as a deacon and a native of Michigan who had been married for 10 years. In the profile, Smith listed Minnesota pastor John Piper as his hero because God used Piper to introduce him to the writings of Jonathan Edwards and to teach him "the meaning and the joy of the supremacy of Christ in all things."

On the same page, Smith said if he could spend an evening with anyone who lived in the past 1,000 years, he would choose Jonathan Edwards because Edwards understood "that God gave us minds for the [sole] purpose of glorifying Him... As a man of supreme intellect and prestige, he was refreshingly humble and holy."

In recounting his life story on the profile page, Smith wrote, "I was raised in the church from the time I was an infant. It was only by the grace of God that I went through my high school and college years free from the major struggles

that many of those I knew dealt with. It was not always sunshine and lollipops but God's hand was always leading me and He brought me to where I am today. I really have no idea when I gave my heart to Christ, I can't pinpoint a date or time, all I know is that the only life I desire is only wholly sourced in Him. Over the last year or so, God has really shown me what it means to exist for Him alone, and that is where I have found my joy and satisfaction."

Smith's students in Benghazi described him as a teacher who inspired and cared about them. "He was the most amazing person, more like a best friend or family member," Yomna Zentani, 18, told NBC News. "After everything that happened in Libya, we were losing hope and he was the only one who was supporting us, motivating us... He dedicated so much of his time for all his students. He chose to come here and help us and risk his life."

As Smith's family and friends prepare for his funeral, Smith's words on his church profile offer a reminder of his desire that "we strive for and treasure Christ above all things. I don't want the church to be about people, programs, or numbers, but rather a body that reaches out to the hurting and that speaks the truth of the Gospel uncompromisingly into people's lives."

Based on a report by Jamie Dean of **WORLD News Service**. To watch a video of Ronnie Smith recounting the history of redemption by reciting Scripture from Genesis to Revelation, visit historyoffredemption.org.

BIBL iO C i P H E R

CNPG T F V , Q W V V Q N C Q F A D : C F G W V

W R S F O G C P V I N G ' R K F F J B Q N P R O G N V F

K W L N S F O V I N D W T K J F E .

Q O D N V X N Q L N : V I W G V S - V X F

Clue: L = V

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Acts 13:26

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004, © 2005

RELIEF HOUSEPARENT

PALMER HOME FOR CHILDREN

Palmer Home for Children is currently seeking married couples to serve as Relief Houseparents. In this position, Relief Houseparents care for children in a home setting by providing a safe harbor, love, acceptance and healing. This new foundation is accomplished through the Whole Child Initiative by meeting the emotional, physical, spiritual and educational needs of each child.

Relief Houseparents are responsible for the children in their care 24/7 with regular days off monthly. A competitive salary, housing, food and excellent benefit package provided. Please visit www.palmerhome.org to view a complete Houseparent job description. To apply, please email cover letter and resume to talikins@palmerhome.org or mail to Palmer Home for Children, P.O. Box 746, Columbus, MS 39703

Penningtons travel winding road to Peru mission field

RICHMOND, Va. (IMB) — Brian and Jennifer Pennington knew God was calling them to be missionaries, and that was pretty much the extent of their plan.

When the couple from Fort Worth, Texas, and their two young sons arrived at the International Mission Board (IMB) candidate conference for new missionaries, they didn't have much to go on.

"We were in Richmond, and everyone there already had their assignment before they got there," remembers Brian. "We were the only ones there who didn't know where we were going. Everybody's researching their people groups, and we're still trying to figure out, 'OK, God, where do you want us to work?'"

Brian first felt called to full-time missions in Peru while on a short-term mission trip in the Peruvian jungle, so when God called his family he felt sure they would accept an open position in the jungle.

"Our starting point was Peru," he said. "All I had ever been to was the jungle but when we found out more about the position, it just wasn't a good fit for our family so we looked at the positions that were left."

The only other position available in Peru was a church-planting position in the Andes Mountains.

"We weren't thinking mountains," Brian said, "but God showed us Isaiah 52:7, which says, 'How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news.'"

With a long-term plan in place, the Penningtons moved to San Jose, Costa Rica, for a year of language training.

The curveballs didn't stop coming. "We thought we were going to Huaraz, a city of 50,000," Brian said, "and we're

from a city, so we thought well, we can do 50,000 people. That's still city-ish."

Just one week before moving from Costa Rica to Peru, the Penningtons were surprised again. Their future supervisor, who had originally written the job request, lived in Huaraz, but the Penningtons would actually be working three hours outside the city in a rural town of less than 3,000.

To top things off, they also were told their future supervisor had just resigned.

Although nothing seemed to be going according to plan, the Penningtons still felt confident in their call. Not knowing what to expect, they switched gears and moved to the tiny mountain town of Chavin de Huanter.

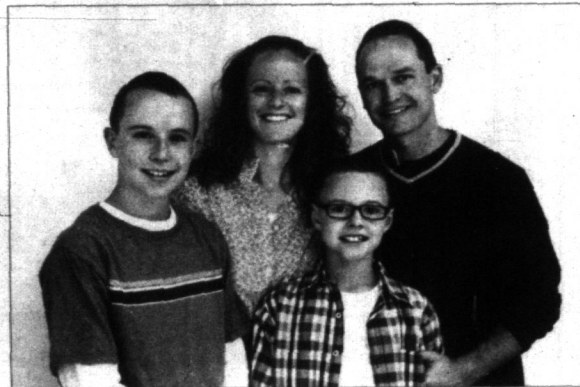
They were ready to be Christ's heart, hands, and voice to the people of the Peruvian Andes. Two weeks after arriving in Chavin, they met Patricia de Loarte, a Chavin native who had been living in the Peruvian capital of Lima.

Patricia, a Baptist believer, had recently moved back to Chavin and had been looking for a church.

"We had been praying to find somebody to start an outreach group with," said Jennifer, "and she had just moved into town and had been praying for a community of Baptist believers. To her, we were an answer to prayer, and it was an answer to prayer for us because here was someone that God had placed in our path who said, 'Come to my house. I want to start a Bible study group.'"

"God knew exactly what we needed, and exactly what Patricia needed, and He just put us together," Brian said.

With Patricia's help, the Penningtons began a small Bible study where Peruvian believers study Scripture and learn to



FINALLY THERE — Southern Baptist missionaries Brian (back, right) and Jennifer (back, second from right) Pennington and their sons, Jordan (front, left) and Trevor took a circuitous route to their place of service in a small village in Peru, but they finally landed there through the leading of God and support from the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and the Cooperative Program. (IMB photo)

share the Gospel with others in their community.

"The presence of [the Pennington family] is something that attracts attention of the people here, because they are foreigners," Patricia said. "It is a blessing to have brothers here where we live, to be able to talk with them, to discuss the Word."

"The people here accept them, but they are curious as to why they are here. When we go out with them to small communities everyone exclaims, 'Gringos! Look, gringos!'"

As the group grew, Brian began teaching oral Bible storying as a way of sharing the Gospel with those who can't read. Many Peruvians living in rural areas outside Chavin only speak Quechua, a difficult indigenous language. Teaching bilingual believers in Chavin to tell Bible stories helps spread

the Gospel to other Peruvian villages where Quechua would be a major obstacle for most North American missionaries.

Patricia, a passionate evangelist and promoter of Bible storying, has also invited members of her former church in Lima to make missions trips to villages around Chavin. She encourages them to use storying as a primary method of evangelism.

"My prayer request is to reach the whole community," she said. "I offer this community to the Lord, so that we can see souls come to the Lord and know the Word, and meet with us."

"I think she realizes storying is a way she can tell others [about Jesus]," Jennifer said. "She sees this can be beneficial to so many people."

Despite the initial challenges and uncertainties, the couple believes that moving to Chavin

and meeting Patricia was part of God's larger plan for reaching the lost in the Peruvian mountains.

The Penningtons' involvement in that plan was made possible by Southern Baptists' support through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and the Cooperative Program.

"In the end, we definitely could see that it was God's plan all along," Jennifer said of their ministry in Chavin. "Maybe we wouldn't have picked that job request if we had known it was a city of only 3,000 people, but that was the way that God got us there."

"In the beginning, we didn't know diddly about being missionaries," Brian said, "and we didn't even have a supervisor but God told us to go start some churches. Nothing actually turned out like it was supposed to be, but we've always taken comfort in the fact that God knew the whole time how it was going to be."

"It wasn't a surprise to Him, and we learned to trust Him in that."

Recently, God surprised the Penningtons once again. After three and a half years of service in Chavin de Huanter, they felt the Lord leading them to a new mission assignment. Working with local Peruvian believers and U.S. "partner" churches, the couple now helps with training, logistical support, and strategy in an effort to plant churches in more than 100 communities across Peru.

In other news for the Pennington family, missionary kids Jordan and Trevor Pennington are featured in the 2013 International Mission Study on Peru, published by the Woman's Mission Union auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention.

To learn more about the study, visit wmu.com/peru.

Second prayer gathering announced for January 13-14

ATLANTA (BP and local reports) — Building from a prayer gathering of senior pastors this fall, a group of Southern Baptist pastors is inviting pastors, other ministers, and ministry students to participate in a two-day prayer meeting in Atlanta on Jan. 13-14.

A Call to Pray for Revival and Awakening, "is time for us to pray in an extraordinary way, to seek the God of heaven to revive His church and awaken our nation," Ronnie Floyd, senior pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas, said in a written statement to Baptist Press.

Floyd, a primary organizer of a 42-member invitation team, announced the gathering on the meeting's website, prayingpastors.com. Information about the gathering at the Westin Atlanta Airport Hotel also is being disseminated via Twitter using the hashtag #prayingpastors.

Each member of the invitation team has committed to attend the event in its

entirety, Floyd said on the website. Representing Mississippi on the invitation team is Eric Hankins, senior pastor of First Church, Oxford.

"We had a fabulous response to our Dallas prayer gathering," Floyd said. "We did not have any plans to do another gathering but wanted only what God wanted. There was a real desire to do something again [and] many were not able to attend Dallas."

"Additionally, there was a cry for it to be expanded beyond senior pastors. After listening, prayer and discussion, we determined God wanted us to open it up to all Southern Baptist senior pastors and God-called ministers. Therefore, we worked for a month to define the time and place."

A total of 178 senior pastors from 27 states attended the gathering on Sept. 30-Oct. 1 in the Dallas-Fort Worth suburb of Southlake. A video at prayingpastors.com plays anonymously some of

the prayers offered by attendees. Among the prayers:

■ "God, how dare we preach words that aren't anointed by the Spirit."

■ "I don't want to do this if You don't come down in power. Lord, I don't want to do ministry without the filling of the Spirit. Lord, it's one thing to read about it. We want to experience revival."

■ "We're going to proclaim... the Gospel. Not our thinking, not our thoughts, not our agendas. But we will say what You ask us to say. We'll go places You ask us to go. We'll do the things that You ask us to do."

■ "Help us, God, understand that since You called us, You qualified us, God. Since You called us, God, You equipped us, O God. Since You called us, You made our hearts prepared. Let us remind ourselves now, God, You're still going to do great things in this land."

■ "God, I'm not going to let go of You until You burst from the heavens and come down."

Both the Dallas gathering in the fall and the Atlanta gathering to come are "real prayer meetings," Floyd said. "This is not a place to come and go or come and be seen. We begin together and we end together. Built upon the Word of God, we move into prayer moments personally, together, for each other, our churches and our nation."

There is no cost to attend the prayer gathering, but all attendees must register through the website and are responsible for their own travel and hotel costs. Hotel reservations must be made by Dec. 22 to secure a group rate of \$119 per night.

The meeting will involve ministers who "are desperate for a move of God in our churches and in our nation," Floyd said. "They realize to penetrate their towns, cities and our nation, God will have to empower a mighty movement of revival in the church so we can see spiritual awakening in our nation."

Christians being extorted in Egypt

CAIRO (BP and local reports) — Islamic extremists and criminals are extorting Christians in Egyptian towns, while trouble brews over the country's new protest law and constitution.

According to Morning Star News, a news service reporting on the persecuted church, Islamist radicals in several Egyptian towns have begun a campaign of terrorism and extortion against Christians.

Muslim extremists in a number of towns are demanding Christians pay the jizya, a Quran-based fine on non-Muslims known as the "humiliation" or "submission" tax.

Human rights activists told Morning Star News that radicals and ordinary criminals have started a cottage industry from extorting Christians. They threaten kidnapping, torture, and murder to seize money and property from Christians mainly in southern Egypt.

"What you are dealing with now is some criminals attacking Christians — Christians who own shops and things like that," Mina Thabet, founding member of the Maspero Youth Union, told Morning Star News, adding that Islamists see persecuting Christians as a religious duty.

Almost every week, there are reports of Coptic Christians kidnapped and held for ransom. Ezat Ibrahim, director of the Minya branch of the Al-Kalema Human Rights Organization, told Morning Star News that many of the victims were tortured so severely that they could not even speak about what happened.

"This past month alone, we had nine cases of kidnapping in Minya, and they all paid their ransom, which was between 100,000 and 250,000 Egyptian pounds [US\$14,500 to \$36,300] for each case," Ibrahim said.

Coptic Christians are believers who lived in Egypt before Muslims overran the country

in 641 A.D. They constitute the largest religious minority in modern day Egypt.

One Copt who worked as a human rights researcher was kidnapped and severely tortured, with the kidnappers repeatedly firing an automatic rifle next to his ear, Morning Star News reported. The shockwaves and muzzle flash shattered the man's eardrums and burned his face. Only after his family paid 50,000 Egyptian pounds (\$7,260) in ransom was he freed.

According to Morning Star News, most of the attacks take place in the Minya Governorate, 152 miles south of Cairo, and the Assuit Governorate, 200 miles south of Cairo.

In one village, Watani Weekly reported, a heavily-armed criminal group led by a man known as "Saddam Hussein" threatens to kill Christians or their children if they don't pay the jizya. Many Copts have paid the extortion money, which can range from 25,000 to 250,000 Egyptian pounds (\$3,360 to \$36,300).

The ransom demands are exorbitant for normal Egyptians, Morning Star News reported, and are based on a perception among Muslims that Copts are wealthy. If someone can't pay, he or she must beg friends and relatives to contribute, meaning one kidnapping can drain a community.

Landowners who do not pay have their fields and livestock set on fire.

Thabet told Morning Star News that lack of police initiative, hatred for Christians among the perpetrators, and the failure of the justice system on behalf of Christians leads to a perception that Christians can be attacked with impunity.

"If you hurt a Christian, no one is going to do anything to you," Thabet said. "No one is ever brought to justice in any sectarian violence against Christians."



NEW PARTNERSHIP — Audra Long (left) of New Orleans, a staffer with summer FUGE camps, visited South Africa in 2011 to build relationships and assess needs in preparation for the upcoming five-year partnership with sub-Saharan Africa. Here, she reads a story to a class at Johannesburg Girls Preparatory School. (IMB photo)

FUGE campers open hearts, wallets for missions efforts

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — More than \$11 million. That's the amount of money given to missions at LifeWay camps since 1984.

"It's incredible," said Mark Robbins, FUGE camps coordinator for LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, headquartered in Nashville. "Just incredible."

The collection is indeed incredible, especially considering the offerings come from students ranging from third grade through high school.

Summer 2014 will mark the 35th anniversary of the FUGE mission offering. Centrifuge, now called FUGE, is a summer camp for seventh- to 12th-grade students which began in 1979.

Campers gave their first offering for missions in 1980. Since then, LifeWay has divided the offerings between the International Mission Board (IMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention, based in Richmond, Va., and the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board (NAMB) in Alpharetta, Ga.

LifeWay campers, numbering around 100,000 this summer, donated more than \$600,000 to missions.

For NAMB, the offerings will fund missions efforts in the Bronx and in Canada. For IMB, 2013 donations will help meet needs of orphans in East Asia through a project called One Child, in a new focus on age-appropriate projects, said Jeremy Echols, who leads LifeWay's CentriKid team.

Meanwhile, the 2013 CentriKid partnership (grades three through six) provided \$65,009 to orphans in East Asia living in isolated and difficult conditions, reported Tobias Jones (not his real name), IMB student strategist in the region.

In an environment where \$10 will feed a child for a month, and \$30 will provide clothing

and thermal underwear to keep kids warm throughout the long winters, the offering literally changes lives.

"Many of these kids were orphaned because their mothers died during labor or their parents died because they didn't have basic medical care," Jones said. "Spiritually, these kids have almost zero opportunity to hear about Jesus. They need to see His love and hear His love."

Christian workers among the orphans are praying for more opportunities to show God's love, such as meeting their most basic needs, Jones said.

"FUGE has partnered with IMB for years and years," Echols said. "Sometimes the projects like True Love Waits and HIV awareness were a better fit for teens than for kids. It's been great this year for CentriKid to focus on meeting the physical needs of kids in an orphanage in East Asia."

When CentriKid began in 2001, LifeWay combined the FUGE and CentriKid offerings and gave them to support student projects through IMB's International World Changers (IWC). In 2006, LifeWay and IMB also began identifying specific projects that allowed students to pray, give, and go to a specific people group.

"The pray, give, go tag keeps kids from getting confused with the details," Echols said. "Praying is something they can all do. Giving is something they can all do, and they can go now or go later."

In 2014, CentriKid campers will help provide clean drinking water to villagers in India. Although access to water is a luxury in many villages, providing clean water may be as simple as replacing a broken pump handle or other equipment for existing water resources.

Through an IMB project called

One Cup of Water, Christian workers in India hope to repair broken pumps or provide new ones in 1,200 villages.

While CentriKid's kid-friendly partnerships are just getting started, FUGE and IWC have worked together for more than 15 years. A portion of the FUGE offering provides ministry funds so IWC's student teams can work alongside career missionaries on short-term projects.

In addition, FUGE currently is teaming with IMB workers in sub-Saharan Africa, its second people group-specific initiative since 2006. The first five-year FUGE project involved the Roma people of Eastern Europe.

The value of these relationships to IMB's global mission is significant, said Kurt Holiday, an IMB strategy leader in sub-Saharan Africa. "Knowing that 50,000 partners are joining with us to shatter the silence in sub-Saharan Africa is tremendously encouraging. The prayers offered [by campers] give us strength and the offerings provided ... have enabled us to dream."

Since the FUGE partnership with sub-Saharan Africa began, campers have provided prayer support and funds for a high school sports ministry in Cape Town, South Africa; helped refurbish a hospital in Sanyati, Zimbabwe; and supported a project to rescue abandoned babies in Johannesburg and Soweto, South Africa.

For more information on IMB student opportunities, visit imb-students.org. For more information on IMB projects such as One Child and One Cup of Water, visit onelifematters.org. For videos and additional information on FUGE's partnership with sub-Saharan Africa, visit fugeforafrica.org. For information about CentriKid camps, visit centrikid.com.



EGYPT IN FLAMES — This screenshot of a video posted on Facebook in August by the pastor of First Baptist Church, Cairo shows the smoldering ruins of Beni Mazar Baptist Church in Minya, Egypt. (BP photo)

Just for the Record



FIRST CHURCH, POTTS CAMP, honored veterans Nov. 10. The GA's presented them with thank you cards and had favor bags for the children.

In other Church News:

➤ **Bethel Church, Columbus**, will present *It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year* by the choir and children Dec. 15, 6 p.m.

➤ **Tylertown Church, Tylertown**, held its 13th annual Judgment House production Oct. 27 - Nov. 3. Over the course of the week 1,850 attended with 116 salvation decisions recorded and a total of 443 responses to the gospel message, including decisions for commitment and prayer counseling.



The children's choir and youth of **CALVARY CHURCH, VICKSBURG**, presented *Great Big Story*.



FIRST CHURCH, POLKVILLE, recently ordained Larry Reynolds and Ben Lee as deacons. Shown are Reynolds, Wanda Reynolds, pastor Zach Kilpatrick, Gretchen Lee, and Lee.



FIRST CHURCH, MADISON, hosted Wanda Lee, Executive Director, WMU, Sept. 22, in celebration of WMU's 125th anniversary. Lee spoke at all three services at the church and participated in a luncheon for all WMU members and their families. Shown are pastor Ronnie Falvey, Hilda Westbrook, Lee, and Mark Coon.



OLD MT. PISGAH CHURCH, CHOCTAW COUNTY, held a baby dedication recently. Shown are Zach Crimm, Claire Crimm holding baby Coleigh Scott, Katie Huffman holding baby boy Maddox Logston, and Daniel Huffman.

Truth is not relative

Find it in the One who is the way, truth, and life.

Simply, share the following prayer with God:

1. I am a sinner.

2. I need forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. I repent.

3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you.

4. I believe in Jesus.

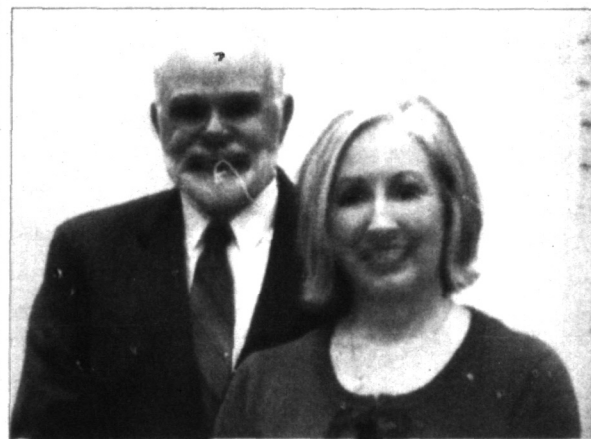
5. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life.

From this time on, I want to live in a living relationship with Him. I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.

God, even to those who believe in his name. (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

Staff Changes



MCCOOL CHURCH, ATTALA ASSOCIATION, has called Dick Hill as pastor. He is shown with his wife, Linda.



BIBLES AND TAPAS — Connexion student leaders in Seville, Spain, hold weekly Bible discussion groups while enjoying tapas, which are traditional Spanish small plates of food. On this night, they discuss the presence of God during difficult times. Southern Baptist missionary Martha Moore conceived the idea of Connexion while serving in Germany, and the ministry has now spread to other campuses in Germany and Spain. (BP photos)

GERMANY

cont. from p. 1

the students who had been meeting faithfully in two small group studies became known as Connexion in 2000. It is exactly what Martha dreamed about: a reproducible evangelistic campus ministry staffed and led by national believers.

Today, it has spread to two other German campuses and one campus in Seville, Spain.

As Moore moves through her apartment in Braunschweig, Germany, she lights several candles in her windowsill and adjusts a Christmas light strand that stays lit year-round. Behind her, the windows reveal the grayness of the day.

"We don't see a whole lot of sun here. It can be very depressing," she says.

She uses the candles and decorative lights to help counteract the darkness and lift her spirits, but some days she grabs her journal and a fresh cup of tea and confesses her struggles to God.

It takes a lot to break Moore's enthusiasm, but on those emotionally dark days she says that God has led her to pray to be the mist that rains down His love in Germany, where only about three percent of the population is evangelical Christian.

She remembers one particularly challenging time in her ministry when she had trained several leaders, only to have them move away. Feeling weary, she confessed to God that she didn't have the emotional energy anymore.

In time and with the prayers of her faithful family and friends, God renewed her spirits.

Moore is grateful for the prayers of congregations, like

On the web

For more information, visit totallyhis.imbresources.org, and connexionEurope.wordpress.com.

her home churches of Christ Fellowship in Tampa and Seabreeze Church in Huntington Beach, Ca. She also appreciates the generosity of Southern Baptists in giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions and the Cooperative Program, which support her and nearly 5,000 other Southern Baptist missionaries around the world.

She says most U.S. churches don't realize the spiritual lostness of the European region because many people are perceived to have access to the Gospel there, but what's worse in Moore's mind than not having access to the truth of God's Word is having it and not caring.

Evangelicals, Moore explains, are typically viewed as a cult in Western Europe.

Some Europeans cling to the atheist teaching of past communism. Others are content with a nominal relationship to the state church.

The majority of students Moore meets follow the post-modern view that belief in any absolute truth is ignorant. Biblical teachings seem antiquated and constricting of their personal freedoms. Families discourage involvement in groups that teach a change of lifestyle or need for repentance.

For example, it had taken time for Moore to lead to faith a young woman she had met when she first moved to Jena.

When the young woman's parents discovered her Bible, they tore it up.

With only a few exceptions, the more than 30 students active in Connexion in Braunschweig are the only Christians in their families. Those who choose to actively follow Christ are routinely ridiculed as religious fanatics.

The spiritual ground of Germany is hardened to the Gospel, but Moore remains strong in her belief that God will continue to do a great work in hearts there.

Henning was raised to hate God but now follows Christ with passion as an active leader in Connexion.

The only religion Birthe knew was paying a yearly tax to the state Protestant church. Now she trains others to share their faith in Christ.

Nikola stands strong in her faith, though her family will not support it.

Anja was so afraid in her first Bible study that she never spoke. Today she leads the Braunschweig Connexion team.

The list of students radically transformed by God's grace is lengthy, and Moore expects it to continue to grow. She loves the challenge of reaching a community that most think won't turn to God.

Moore is serving in Europe through Southern Baptists' gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and the Cooperative Program, which fund the presence and missions outreach of nearly 5,000 Southern Baptist missionaries internationally.

For more information, visit totallyhis.imbresources.org, and connexionEurope.wordpress.com.

CD or IRA
Maturing?

7%
First Year
GUARANTEED*



L.D.
O'Mire
Financial Services

1.800.844.3254

MEDICARE
Supplement

SAVE Up To

40%

O'Mire
Financial
Services
1.800.844.3254

University
Baptist
Church

University Baptist Church is seeking a
Full-time Education Youth Minister

Send resume to:
University Baptist
Church, Attention:
Ashley Barrios/
Search Committee,
604 Menard Street,
Thibodaux, LA 70301
or Email:
abc@ubethibodaux.net

MS POSITIONS

TRINITY BAPTIST CHURCH, LAUREL, MS HIGHWAY 15 N IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR THE POSITION OF FULL-TIME PASTOR. Please send resumes to Trinity Baptist Church, 35 Trinity Rd., Laurel, MS 39443. Attention: Pastor Search Committee.

UNION BAPTIST CHURCH NEAR MERIDIAN, MS IS PRAYERFULLY SEARCHING FOR A PART-TIME MUSIC WORSHIP LEADER. Email your resume to aahm143@aol.com or mail to Union Baptist Church, 159 Hwy 514, Meridian, MS, 39301

SEEKING POSITION - Minister of Music-Part Time-Within 100 miles of Grenada, MS. 862-614-5500

PART-TIME YOUTH PASTOR SEARCH. Send resumes to: Calvary Baptist Church Attn: Youth Committee P.O. Box 86 Fulton, MS 38843

TILLATOBA BAPTIST CHURCH, TILLATOBA MS, YALOBUSHA ASSOCIATION, IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL MUSIC DIRECTOR. Please send resume to Tillatoba Baptist Church: Attn. Music Search Committee, P.O. Box 101, Tillatoba, MS 38961.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF SATARTIA IS PRAYING AND SEARCHING FOR A PIANIST. Please send information to FBC of Satartia P.O. Box 42 Satartia, Mississippi 39162

CLASSIFIEDS

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, FOLEY, AL IS SEEKING A FULL-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC AND SENIOR ADULTS. Worship style is blended. We are looking for a leader who is gifted in music and building a dynamic worship ministry. Minister will also oversee our senior adult ministries. Email resumes to scollins@fbcfoley.com. Please include a video of you leading worship. Resumes will be accepted until January 15.

THOMPSON HILL BAPTIST HAS FREE PEWS. Contact: 601-508-5159

WINDOW AND SCREEN SHOP — windows and storm windows built to fit your opening. Plus new window screens and rescreen old screens. Call Tom Cook 601-709-4879.

GET AWAY AT BETSY'S LIL' CABINS call for a brochure 601-940-6841.

CHURCH PEW UPHOLSTERY, FREE ESTIMATES. Davis Upholstery, Quitman, Miss., phone 601-776-6617.

GATLINBURG RENTALS: Cabin \$95/night and Condo \$75/night. Contact: 832-922-0401 or E-mail: pdw4760@att.net for information and booking.

STAINED GLASSWORKS, INC., serving MS & AL since 1992. Call 800-605-2970

SEBREN'S SIDING www.sebrenhomeimprovement.com. Christian owned Don & Rita Sebre. 601-992-2092. All home improvements, siding, energy efficient windows, metal & shingle roofs, screen & sunrooms, patio covers, decks, room additions, kitchen & bath upgrades.

STAINED GLASS: new windows and repairs. Hopper Stained Glass, Jackson, 601-502-0202.

GET THE BEST RATES ON: Health Insurance and Medicare Supplements. Call 1-800-541-8196 or visit www.TurnerInsuranceOnline.com

SCOTS

cont. from p. 1

the window, she called Wilson. When Charles (not his real name) was bleeding after a knife fight and needed a ride to the hospital, Wilson drove him.

For Wilson, a Southern Baptist missionary to Scotland, loving these young people is as easy and as hard as loving sons and daughters. She's been a part of their lives for more than a decade and seen their triumphs as well as their stumbles.

Wilson breathes the message of Jesus into these relationships, but it isn't always easy. She has seen some people turn to Christ and continue to follow Him. Others, like Graeme, have turned away from their faith and chosen to believe in their own abilities.

"It saddens me that they would choose to think that they can manufacture a life for themselves that's greater than what God can manufacture for them," says Wilson. "That saddens me that they would want to basically be god in their lives."

Many years ago, Wilson and a ministry teammate spray-

TOTALLY HIS

HEART, HANDS, VOICE

"It saddens me that they would choose to think that they can manufacture a life for themselves that's greater than what God can manufacture for them. That saddens me that they would want to basically be god in their lives."

Gena Wilson

IMB missionary

painted the Gospel message in pictures in an old greenhouse, a popular teen hangout. Time and other graffiti have eclipsed the drawings, but Wilson can still see where a youth who used to attend her Bible studies painted on top: "Nobody cares, Gena."

Success is hard to measure

in Glasgow. Addiction, violence, and self-sufficiency war against her message of hope, deliverance, and surrender. She has felt disheartened, she says, but she trusts in the redeeming heart of God.

Graeme was one of the kids Wilson met on her neighborhood's block of flats 11 years ago. Alastair Cochrane, a science teacher at the school where Wilson has served as chaplain for nearly 10 years, says Graeme was one of the kids who was always in trouble, getting into fights and skipping school.

Then Graeme met Wilson. "She was interested in people," says Graeme. "She didn't fight, she didn't go out and get drunk, she didn't laze about all day. There was also how she lived her faith... trying to care for other people, trying to tell them about her faith and how that influenced her."

When Cochrane's second daughter was born, Wilson brought Graeme to her dedication. "It was just the most beautiful moment for me," Cochrane says. "This kid — I used to be really scared for his future and be quite uncomfortable in his presence — celebrated with us that God had blessed me with a daughter. That's what God did with Graeme through Gena."

When Graeme started participating in school clubs with Wilson and then Bible studies in her flat, he made the decision to become a Christian.



GETTING READY — Missionary Gena Wilson (left) meets with an unidentified teacher to discuss plans for an upcoming assembly at Glasgow's Springburn Academy, where Wilson serves as chaplain. She considers the school one of her most important mission fields. (BP photo)

The kid that was headed down the path of drugs, violence, and dropping out of school graduated from the University of Glasgow, a service that Wilson attended sitting beside Graeme's mother.

"I value her friendship immensely," Graeme says. "She's a big source of wisdom."

Success was a double-edged sword for Graeme. He moved away to pursue further studies. He saw others doing good things without relying on God, and his faith wavered.

Graeme talks regularly with Wilson over the phone and through social media. "I don't view him as a project. He is a person who I love and desire to see God's best in him. I get the privilege of continuing to journey with him, believing that what God has started in him, He's going to bring to completion."

Wilson has to remind herself that God's plans are not her own. That message became evident on a scheduled trip to the U.S. in 2011. She went to the doctor to have back pain checked out. The news in the days ahead wasn't what she expected to hear: a cancerous tumor wrapped around her spine that required surgery and chemotherapy.

Her struggle against non-Hodgkin's lymphoma lasted 17 months and had her wondering if she would see her beloved Scotland again.

Through Facebook messages and video updates posted

on YouTube, Wilson kept the messages going back to Scotland and around the world. She even recorded a special Christmas message that was shown at Springburn Academy, where Wilson regularly counseled students.

Her message was clear. God can be trusted even in the midst of cancer.

"It's so good that this happened even if all that [God] wanted to accomplish was to teach me how to trust Him even in the midst of suffering," she says.

After close to a year back in Glasgow, the cancer returned in the form of a brain tumor. Wilson doesn't remember much about those first weeks when the tumor was discovered, but she does remember the love that surrounded her from her friends there.

Wilson returned to South Carolina in February 2013 for treatment. Speaking from her Beaufort home, Wilson says the hardest part for her now is not having a return ticket to Scotland. Her heart is in Glasgow, and she doesn't entertain the thought that she won't go back.

In August 2013, her doctors told her that she was cancer-free. Wilson is hopeful that she will make a full recovery and be back in Glasgow by early 2014.

She is quick to tell those who watch her videos or read her updates, "God's goodness is not defined by my health. Cancer can't touch heaven. The best is yet to come."

T.J. and Dena Odom of Alabama and Massachusetts joined Wilson's ministry team in Scotland in the fall of 2012. Wilson and the Odoms are among the nearly 5,000 Southern Baptist missionaries internationally who are supported through Southern Baptists' gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and the Cooperative Program.

For more information, visit totallyhis.imbresources.org.

Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electronically via e-mail, as attachments in JPEG format. Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted. Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

MSAudio LLC

Design & Integration of Professional Audio, Video, & Lighting
Church, Conference Room, School
Equipment sales, service and installation

Trooper Hales
info@msaudio.com

P.O. Box 1575
Clinton, MS 39060

Ph 601-923-9947
Fax 601-924-2880

THE VILLAGE VIEW



Dr. Rory Lee, Executive Director

P.O. Box 27

Clinton, MS 39060-0027

(601) 922-2242

www.baptistchildrensvillage.com

GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORY

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

SEPTEMBER 2013

MEMORIALS

Charmian Smith
Miss Lucy Mikell
James "Sonny" Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Ernest L. Scruggs
Maxine Smith
Fidelis SSC, Morrison Heights BC
Mrs. Carolyn Snell
Mr. & Mrs. Dwight McComb
Ms. Cathy J. McComb
Carol Ann Snowden
Mr. & Mrs. Perry E. Atherton
Mr. Joe Spears
Mr. J. V. Parker
Mrs. Almedia "Tootsie" Spires
Mrs. Mildred E. Witcher
Dianne Stevens
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas D. House
Allen Stokes
Mr. & Mrs. Michael W. Betts
Mr. Huey Summerlin
Rev. & Mrs. William B. Webb
Mrs. Faye Tadlock
Mr. & Mrs. Steve Weeks
Mrs. Marjory Thornton
Carey Goza
Ms. Belinda S. Gordon
Ms. Debra Thomas
Ms. Jane E. Nichols
Ms. Melinda Hand
Ms. Rita D. Murphy
Mrs. Willard Tigrett
Mr. & Mrs. Steve Weeks

Mrs. Jewel Tisdale
Mrs. Sally Hefner and Family
Mr. & Mrs. Woody (Jewel) Tisdale
Dr. & Mrs. Robert M. Hanvey
Mrs. Kristee Trammell
Mr. & Mrs. Curtis A. Buchanan
Richard Truitt
Mrs. Myrl McCormick
O'Bannon Tucker
Mr. & Mrs. Danny Withers
Gertrude Versiga
Arlington Heights BC
Bessie Mae Wells
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Newsom
Mr. Chad White
Mr. & Mrs. Steve Weeks
Thomas "Buddy" White
Conway BC
Mrs. Zema Williams
Seekers SSC, FBC Lexington
L. G. Young
Concord BC

OCTOBER 2013

HONORS

Mrs. Kathy Davis
Mrs. Gayle Cornwell
Rev. Stan Davis
Adult III SSC, North Columbia BC
Mrs. Glenda Fry
Mrs. Dora L. Murray
Mr. & Mrs. Billy Russell
Mr. & Mrs. Ronnie E. Thaxton

OCTOBER 2013

MEMORIALS

Jerry Adams
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel A. Smith
Evelyn (Adene) Addison
Mr. & Mrs. Calvin W. Porter
Mr. & Mrs. George Ricko
Mr. & Mrs. W. L. Porter
Joe Alcorn
Mount Pleasant BC
Sylvia H. Alford
Mr. & Mrs. John J. Hall, III
Mr. Anthony Allen
Mr. & Mrs. W. M. McElroy
Gage Allen
Mr. & Mrs. Brooks H. Polk, Jr.
Mr. Jim Ballard
Dr. Robert M. Abraham
Mr. James Bass
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmie L. Mantion
Rose B. Beggs
Mr. Charles W. Holmes
Brice Cannon Bishop
Mr. & Mrs. Andy Oakes
James Micah "Jimmy" Bishop
Mr. & Mrs. Wm. Rex Patterson & Family
Jerry L. Blades
Mr. & Mrs. Brooks H. Polk, Jr.
Curtis Bobinger
Mary Morgan, Randy, Kelsey & Shelby
Mr. Paul Bobitt
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Dean
Mr. Leroy Boyd
Cecil & Penny Washington
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Dean
Mrs. Mary Buckley
Mrs. Syble B. Lee
Paul W. Buford
Curtis & Shirley Underwood
Kim & Anthony O'Bryant
Shelia B. Flippo
Scott Buford
Jon Bunch
Mr. & Mrs. George A. Lee
Davis Burns
Cecil & Penny Washington
Mr. Thomas W. "Tom" Cade
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Dew
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Mr. Jerry Caffey
Mr. & Mrs. Robert E. Heffner
Mrs. Marjorie J. Cox
Robert E. Cahoon Jr.
Dr. & Mrs. Neil H. Simmons
James Wilton Camp
Ms. Sue Moore
Mrs. Pat Catledge
Mr. & Mrs. Curtis A. Buchanan
Francis Fuquay Caviness
Mr. & Mrs. Gregg T. Tindle & Family
Doug Clanton
Mr. & Mrs. Gregg T. Tindle
John Clark
Mrs. Sally M. Watts
Dr. William Clawson
Mr. & Mrs. Lamont Jarrell
Wallace Clay
Ms. Lisa Leavell
Mr. Hugh Cox
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Bell
Keith Crenshaw
Mr. & Mrs. George R. Faulk
Len Curlee
Mr. & Mrs. Charles R. Willbanks
Mrs. Virginia Darnell
Mr. & Mrs. Dick Robertson
Dewitt Davis
McCool BC
Randall Davis
Mr. J. V. Parker
Alma Dickerson
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Hollingsworth
Ms. Margaret Guyton
Nadine Dickerson
Mr. & Mrs. Carl K. Bagwell
Mr. David Dodd
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Mrs. Estelle Donahoe
Central BC
Dwayne Donaldson
Cecil & Penny Washington
Wade Doolin
Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Harris
Joseph "Joe" Dousay
Mr. & Mrs. Marion Johnston
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Hall
Mr. & Mrs. Johnny Clifton
Keith Johnston
Mr. Morris Downs
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Dean
Mrs. Betty Dyess
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmie L. Mantion
Daniel "Dan" Emhovich
Gary & Amye Wiggs
Chris Evans
Mr. & Mrs. R. W. Cantrell
Mr. Wilson Falgout
Mrs. Hazle M. Daniels
Lucy P. Fisher
Mr. & Mrs. Frank O. Crosthwait, Jr.
Richard Fluker
Mr. & Mrs. M. E. "Sonny" Newton, Jr.
Mrs. Joyce Frazier
Elizabeth Wilson
Freddy & Beth Roberts
Regan & Molly Roberts
Mr. & Mrs. Charles E. Blackwell
Joe Fredrick
Annette Calvert
Mrs. Frances Gardner
Mr. Albert E. Garner
Mrs. Dovie Sue Germany
Beta Sigma Phi
Mr. & Mrs. Dewayne Ervin
Dr. Sharon P. Dungan
Mr. & Mrs. Garland Upton
Mr. & Mrs. Robert L. McKenzie
Mr. & Mrs. Scott E. Pittman
Mr. Roy Miller
Mrs. Reba Miller
Ms. Audene P. Watts
Ruth Sullivan



LEAKE COUNTY Girls in Action recently provided Birthday-in-a-Bag packages for The Baptist Children's Village campuses.

Justin & Karie Bedwell & Family
Grace Gillis
Mr. & Mrs. Carl E. Derrick
Mrs. Sue Grantham
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Mrs. Marion Grenn
Adult 77 SS Dept, FBC McComb
Mrs. Marion B. Grenn
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy B. Carruth
Lena Pearl Griffin
Alan & Barbara Storey
E. J. Grisham
Ms. Sherree L. Tynes
Darrell William (Gundy) Gunderson
Kathy, Jayne Kathryn & Andrew Denson
Jimmy Wayne Gunn
Ms. Jeanette D. Kirby
Dr. Larry Hailey
Cecil & Penny Washington
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Gneimi
Mr. & Mrs. Ray Cothran
Ms. Carolyn L. Rigdon
Jerry Hall
Mr. & Mrs. Albert R. Dulaney
Sherrill Hanberry
Mount Pleasant BC
Mrs. Barbara Harden
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Dean
Tyrone Harrell
Mr. & Mrs. Clay Caston
Drew Harrington
Mr. & Mrs. Jackie Wooley
Mrs. Faye Hendricks
Springfield BC
Scott E. Holliday
Arlington Heights BC
Bill Holroyd
Mrs. Jo Ann R. Stone
Claude Hooper
Cecil & Penny Washington
Mr. Charles Hudson
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Virginia Humphrey
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel A. Smith
Hayden Hux
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Sisco
Mrs. Charlotte Marie Jackson
Mr. & Mrs. Perry E. Atherton
Christine James
Mrs. Bobbie B. Lannon
Mr. Tommy Johnson
Mr. & Mrs. Curtis A. Buchanan
Amber Johnston
Mr. & Mrs. Marion Johnston
Doyle Jones
Ms. Dian Smith
Iva Joyner
Mr. & Mrs. Michael W. Betts
Mrs. Iva Joyner
TEL SSC, Springfield BC
Matthew Kirk
Mr. & Mrs. Brian W. Manning
Mrs. Faye Sawyer Landrum
Mr. Michael B. Hays
Terry Landrum
Mr. & Mrs. Hayes Branscome
Mr. Kenneth Lee
Mr. & Mrs. Billy Mayfield
Mrs. Margie Lemoine
Mr. & Mrs. Barry Dillard
Senior Adult SSC, Siloam BC
Joe Joe Leonard
Mr. & Mrs. Reece Douglas, Jr.
Mrs. Sally Lishman
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Dean
Mrs. Ruby Smith Lofton
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Sisco
Mr. & Mrs. James Crosby
Ben Magee
Mr. & Mrs. Ray Rounsaville
Mr. Larry Wood Magee
Mr. & Mrs. E. W. Speights
Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Wigington
Mrs. Kenneth E. Lee
Ms. Peggy S. Perrin
Ms. Wilma Nell Lee
Miss Lucy Mikell

Believe Exclusively • John 14:1-14, 27-29

Jesus said "I am the way, the truth, and the life." He did mean what he said - Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation, to eternal everlasting life, and to Heaven. There is no truth but God's truth and Jesus is the truth, the highest expression of His Father's truth. Faith in Jesus and Jesus alone is the only way to life.

Jesus emphasizes and clarifies it further by saying: "No one comes to the Father except through Me," John 14:6 (HCSB). Jesus was speaking very clearly to the 11 because they were facing a great test with His arrest, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension to the Father.

Jesus' followers were facing a hard test and He wanted to comfort and strengthen them. So Jesus said: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me," John 14:1 (KJV). Jesus wanted the disciples to understand that in just a few days they would not see Him daily in the flesh but He was not going to abandon them. So He continued: "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also," John 14:2-3 (KJV).

These strong promises were not only to first century followers of Jesus, they are available to us today. When modern Christians face extreme challenges they, too, can claim Jesus' promising words, "Let not your heart be troubled." We have often used them at times of death for funerals and grave side services. These words are extremely comforting if you find yourself at the open grave for a much loved father or beside the tiny coffin of small child or baby.

What Bible believing follower of Christ would not find comfort in Jesus' promise: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." This is a personal promise from the Savior Himself that He will personally pre-

pare each mansion for the individual believer that He loves. And when the time comes that a follower dies, Jesus will come in person to "receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also," John 14:3 (KJV).

Do we ever fully understand this promise from Jesus? Did the disciples understand Jesus' promise that night?

No! Listen to the confused and impassioned Thomas: "Lord, I know where

You're going. How can we know the way?" John 14:5 (HCSB). Have you ever had a child ask you where is Heaven?

Jesus' answer was one of compassionate understanding: "If you know Me, you will also know My Father. From now on you do know Him and have seen Him," John 14:7 (HCSB). Jesus also promised his followers: "If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it," John 14:14 (HCSB).



Explore the Bible

with Don Hicks

A Love You Can Experience • Romans 5:6-11, 18-21

Only God knew what lay ahead for the young church at Rome and He wanted them secure in the knowledge of His love for them. In response to the moving of the Holy Spirit, Paul, a chosen vessel of the Living God, penned the Book of Romans. In Chapter 5 he lays out the incomparable, amazing love of God and reminds believers how Christ died for them when they were weak and helpless and had nothing to offer God, but He had everything to offer them.

In due time, Christ died for the ungodly. That would be all of us. It was a move carefully orchestrated by God. The apostle Peter wrote that Jesus was the Lamb that was foreordained before the foundation of the world, and was manifested in these last times for you (1 Peter 1:20). God had all bases covered. Everything was in place and everything took place just as God foreordained when His only begotten Son died on the cross for a world that was hostile to Him.

David Guzik said in his commentary, "If the cross is the ultimate demonstration of God's love, it is also the ultimate demonstration of man's hatred. It also proves that the height of man's hatred can't defeat the height of God's love."

What amazing proof God gave the

world of His love for us in sending Jesus to the cross. Has a king ever died to redeem all his enemies before? Kings of old usually did everything in their might to wipe out their enemies. Certainly they would never die so that all their enemies might live.

As a result of Christ's obedience to the will of the Father, we, as believers, have much to rejoice in. We can sing with the psalmist, Blessed be the Lord, Who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation (Psalm 68:19). We are no longer enemies of God and alienated from Him, but we have been reconciled to God through Jesus Christ. By shedding His blood for the remission of our sins, Jesus bridged the gap between us and the Father. What we lost through Adam was restored to us through Jesus Christ. John 10:10 records that Jesus came that we might have life and have it more abundantly.

Paul goes on from the love and reconciliation of God to the contrast between Adam and Christ and the law and grace. He explains that Adam's one sin brought judgment and condemnation upon all, but by the righteous act of Christ, the free gift was made available to all so that they might be justified. Does this mean that all will accept the free gift of salvation just because it's offered? No. When a gift is given, it is not necessarily received. Some will reject a gift because of the giver; others, because of pride. Still others will reject it because they don't value it or the price that was paid for it.

Physically we were born into Adam's family and inherited the guilt and the tendency to sin. Therefore the wrath of God was on us. However, God provided a way that we might trade His judgment for His forgiveness and be born again unto eternal life, into His forever family. When we accept this

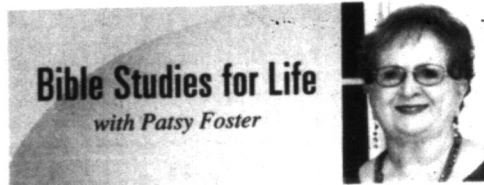
free gift of salvation which Jesus paid the ultimate price for, we belong to Him and are free from the curse of the law, the law that was impossible for us to perfectly keep. The New American Commentator states that the law was never intended to provide salvation but to convince people of their need for salvation.

"If sin abounded under the law, then grace abounded much more under Jesus. Many people have the idea that where grace reigns, there will be a disregard for righteousness and a casual attitude towards sin. But that isn't the reign of grace at all. Grace reigns through righteousness, and grace teaches righteousness." (Guzik)

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age (Titus 2:11-12).

Let the redeemed humbly remember where God has brought us from and what He has saved us from and let us dare to reach out to those bound by sin's misery that they too may come to know the immeasurable love of God.

Foster is a member of Murphy Creek Church, Louisville.



Bible Studies for Life

with Patsy Foster

LEE

cont. from p.2

doing ministry. It always surprises me when a verse comes to mind that will comfort someone in the midst of an earthquake or tsunami.

"GAs cast the vision for sharing the Gospel with your friends, family and beyond. Kind of crazy to think that something I learned in a small town in Kansas also works in spreading the Gospel in Southeast Asia."

Amanda and Susie are just

two examples among thousands today who are supported through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and our Cooperative Program gifts. They also represent many who felt the impact of missions education as a child.

They are our "Lottie

Moons" of today. Their story of faith and commitment to serve and share Christ with those waiting to hear can also be our story as we follow Christ each day.

Happy anniversary, Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and WMU! May you continue

to flourish and grow together until all know of the Savior's love and forgiveness.

Lee is executive director-treasurer of WMU, based in Birmingham, AL. For more information, visit imb.org/offering.

Boot camp prepares missionaries for tough locales

UNDISCLOSED (IMB) — Eighteen Southern Baptist missionaries and their kids watched with mixed emotions as the twin-prop plane took off from the jungle airstrip, headed back to the city. As they stood surrounded by wide rivers and miles of dense Amazon rain forest on all sides, reality began to sink in. They were on their own.

The group trudged through mud and stifling heat, loaded down with children, suitcases, and boxes of supplies before arriving at the camp — a row of simple wooden cabins beside a river that would be home for the next month.

The missionaries, some new and some veterans but all supported by Southern Baptists' Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and the Cooperative Program, were the first group to arrive at the new International Mission Board (IMB) jungle training center designed to help missionaries learn to live and work in tough rural places.

Donny Barger, an IMB missionary and trainer who helped start the camp, said the program will better prepare missionaries going to work among the nearly 230 unengaged, unreached people groups living in isolated places throughout the Americas.

That's 230 people groups that are less than two percent evangelical Christian and who have no one seeking to reach them with the Gospel.

"One of the things we hear most often from missionaries after they complete their first term is, 'I really wish someone would have helped me understand what it was really going to be like going into an indigenous area,'" said Barger, an Alabama native, "and sometimes [lack of preparation] causes you to make big mistakes with your people group that takes you a long time to get out of."

As the older kids set off to explore their new surroundings the confused adults began



NO TURNING BACK — After flying into the Amazon jungle, eight missionary families lug their baggage through a village and down a long path from the airstrip to a new IMB jungle training camp. Participants spend a month at the camp developing skills to learn to minister in rough, isolated places of service. (IMB photo)

learning how to set up a home in the jungle, asking basic questions such as "Where will we sleep?" "Is the river safe to swim in?" and "What is for dinner?"

The learning process had begun.

Before arriving, the trainees had been given very limited information about the upcoming experience. They didn't know what they'd eat or what they'd live in. Cooking options, bathroom facilities, sleeping arrangements, and clean water sources were all mysteries.

One trainee, Lisa Williams (not her real name), had an even more pressing concern as she gazed warily at the river flowing directly beside her cabin. With four children between the ages of one and six, such proximity to fast-moving water made her uneasy.

"I didn't come in with a lot of expectations, because I didn't know what to expect," she said. "I didn't know what our housing would be. I just had to be flexi-

ble and lower my expectations."

Barger said going in unprepared was a planned part of the experience. "If you tell them everything, it really isn't as good a learning experience. Sometimes it's good to not have all the answers and to think through how you're going to respond. It's good to let people discover that on their own."

For the next month, trainees lived in a closely packed community with few modern luxuries. There was no Internet or phone access. Generator-powered electricity was available only for a couple hours on most evenings.

Food selection was limited to a hodge-podge of non-refrigerated goods from a small local store, which was accessible only by canoe every few days. Indoor running water was precious and the nearby river served as the community bathtub, washing machine, food disposal, and transportation route.

Despite the challenges, train-

ers emphasized that the goal was to teach, not torture.

For more than a decade, IMB missionary Jake Johnson (not his real name) has lived in the Amazonian community where the camp was built. He and his wife Tanya (not her real name) now use their expertise in jungle living to teach other missionaries how to thrive in difficult places.

"This is not about roughing it," Johnson told the trainees when they arrived. "This is to help you and your family figure out what needs you're going to have to live comfortably in a remote setting. It's about figuring out what you're going to do in this situation."

"All the things we do out here, we want you to be able to reproduce that where you go, and give you ideas on how to build things and do things that are going to make it easier on you."

The trainees soon learned how to collect rainwater in

barrels and pump it into their homes. They and their children quickly discovered how to avoid the huge thorn trees that lurked beneath the muddy river water.

Meat was scarce and a friendly competition soon arose over who could catch the biggest piranha or wolf fish for dinner. Killing scorpions and tarantulas became routine, and it was understood that privacy and silence didn't exist during waking hours.

While braving the environment, the missionaries attended sessions on sharing the Gospel with indigenous peoples. They also studied some of the most common obstacles missionaries face in rural cultures steeped in animism and witchcraft.

Experienced missionaries gave tips on being a strong, godly family in isolated places.

The group practiced learning difficult, non-written languages. Participants learned to tell simple Bible stories to those who can't read, and each family developed evangelism plans for their specific people group.

Each day's schedule also included times for personal devotion, reflection and prayer.

"We're spending a lot of time focusing on personal devotions," Barger said. "While we have people in a close community with no electricity, no Internet or phone, no television or anything, we're able to disconnect them and give them some solitude."

Amid the chaos of parenting four small children in the jungle, Williams was able to break away for some one-on-one time with God. She said this habit strengthened her spiritual life throughout the training.

"Probably my biggest takeaway from the [training] has been in my prayer life," she said. "I think that's probably the biggest thing — knowing that as we're leaving here and going to our people group, we need to be right with God. We need to be walking in the Spirit."

National African American Fellowship announces selection of official curriculum

NASHVILLE (BP) — The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC)-affiliated National African American Fellowship (NAAF) has chosen the culturally relevant YOU Bible study as its official adult curriculum, the group has announced.

With the designation, NAAF will encourage African American, urban, and multicultural churches to use YOU in adult Sunday School classes and mid-week small group studies. YOU is produced by the SBC's publishing entity, LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville.

"The YOU curriculum is a well-rounded curriculum helping to mature believers in their walk with Christ while at the same time addressing real-life, everyday issues," said NAAF President A.B. Vines Sr., senior pastor of New Seasons Church, in Spring Valley, Ca. "I personally believe this curriculum will help create engaging small group

sessions and fulfilling personal Bible study for every person who uses it."

LifeWay launched the resource in Fall 2008 to provide culturally relevant, Bible-based learning opportunities attractive to a target audience of African American, urban, and multicultural churches.

"We at LifeWay are thrilled to partner with NAAF, and to help provide a Bible study that speaks to people of diverse backgrounds while helping them strengthen their relationship in Christ," said YOU content editor Beverly Sonnier.

YOU is an all-in-one curriculum with Bible study, devotionals, missional articles, and testimonials for learners, with separate teaching plans for leaders. Each lesson is rooted in Scripture and user-friendly.

Hot topics promote discussion and the study intentionally emphasizes missions. Flexible teaching plans are adaptable to

Sunday School and midweek studies.

Churches may purchase YOU Bible Study at LifeWay Christian Stores and other local Christian bookstores, or order online at www.lifeway.com/you. The current study quarter began Dec. 2.

NAAF treasurer Mark Croston, in his concurrent new role as LifeWay's national director of black church partnerships, will serve as YOU general editor, reviewing the curriculum. Croston is former pastor of East End Church in Suffolk, Va., and a former president of the Baptist General Association of Virginia.

NAAF was formed in 1994 to address the needs of African American churches affiliated with the SBC and has as its primary membership pastors of affiliated churches. For more information on NAAF, visit naaf-sbc.org or contact NAAF executive director Elgia Wells at j.wells@naafsb.org.

